

Illinois Social Studies Standards: Grassroots Information Packet

The state of Illinois periodically revises its statewide social studies standards. These standards govern social studies instruction in all Illinois public schools. The revision of statewide standards is a process that is directed by the The Standards and Instruction Department of the Illinois State Board of Education. The Department assembles committees; these committees then write Illinois’ social studies standards and draft recommendations for standards during a standards revision cycle. Qualifications for membership on these standards writing committees are determined by the State Board of Education and vary in each standards revision cycle. In Illinois’ most recent (2020–2022) social studies standards revision cycle, the Board received assistance from the Illinois Inclusive American History Commission; the Commission was responsible for reviewing social studies instructional resources in Illinois’ school districts and providing guidance during social studies standards development to ensure content remains culturally and racially “unbiased.” The Commission was composed of Illinois Senators, history scholars, teachers, principals, local superintendents, and representatives of school boards, districts, and organizations, and representatives of the Illinois State Board of Education. The Illinois Joint Committee on Administrative Rules (JCAR), a bipartisan legislative oversight committee created by the Illinois General Assembly, approves statewide social studies standards. Before this final approval of standards takes place, however, the general public has the opportunity to review and comment on proposed revisions to existing social studies standards through a 45-day public comment period and public hearings held by the Illinois State Board of Education.

Below we explain and list in sequential order:

1. Current Illinois social studies standards and their current website location
2. How often Illinois is required to review and revise its social studies standards
3. State laws and administrative codes governing social studies instruction in Illinois public schools
4. Which state agencies and groups are responsible for writing and adopting social studies standards

5. The electoral or bureaucratic relationships these agencies have with the general public in Illinois
6. What opportunity Illinois community members and educators have to offer feedback and comment during a standards' revision cycle

1. Current Illinois social studies standards and their current website location

[Illinois K-12 Social Studies Standards](#) [Adopted 2016]

[Illinois 2021 Draft of New Social Studies Standards](#) [To be implemented 2022-2023]

a. Website Location

- i. [Illinois State Board of Education \(ISBE\) Website](#)

2. How often Illinois is required to review and revise its social studies standards

Illinois Academic Standards Revision Schedule: Revisions to Illinois' academic standards are mandated by state statute. Thus Illinois does not have an academic standards' revision schedule which requires the state to review and revise its standards every certain number of years.

- a. Any questions can be directed to:

Illinois State Board of Education,
Standards and Instruction Department,
ilteachtalklearn@isbe.net

3. State laws and administrative codes governing social studies instruction in Illinois public schools

a. Illinois Legislation

- i. See: [NAS Compilation of State Statutes concerning Social Studies Instruction for each US State](#)
- ii. [105 ILCS 5/2-3.187](#) [*Inclusive American History Commission*]

b. Illinois Administrative Code: Education and Cultural Resources

- i. [Ill. Admin. Code tit. 23, § 1.420](#) [*Basic Standards*]
- ii. [Ill. Admin. Code tit. 23, § 26.150](#) [*(Early Education) – Curriculum: Social Science*]
- iii. [Ill. Admin. Code tit. 23, § 26.190](#) [*(Early Education) – Diversity*]
- iv. [Ill. Admin. Code tit. 23, § 26.350](#) [*(Elementary Education) – Curriculum: Social Science*]
- v. [Ill. Admin. Code tit. 23, § 26.390](#) [*(Elementary Education) – Diversity*]
- vi. [23 Ill. Admin. Code tit. 23, §1.430](#) [*Additional Criteria for Elementary Schools*]
- vii. [23 Ill. Admin. Code tit. 23, §1.440](#) [*Additional Criteria for High Schools*]

- viii. [Ill. Admin. Code tit. 23, § 24.50](#) [*The Illinois Culturally Responsive Teaching and Leading Standards*]

- ix. [Ill. Admin. Code tit. 23, § 27.200](#) [(*Standards for Endorsements in Specific Teaching Fields*) – *Social Science*]

- x. [Ill. Admin. Code tit. 23, § 27.210](#) [(*Standards for Endorsements in Specific Teaching Fields*) – *Economics*]

- xi. [Ill. Admin. Code tit. 23, § 27.220](#) [(*Standards for Endorsements in Specific Teaching Fields*) – *Geography*]

- xii. [Ill. Admin. Code tit. 23, § 27.230](#) [(*Standards for Endorsements in Specific Teaching Fields*) – *History*]

- xiii. [Ill. Admin. Code tit. 23, § 27.240](#) [(*Standards for Endorsements in Specific Teaching Fields*) – *Political Science*]

- xiv. [Ill. Admin. Code tit. 23, § 27.250](#) [(*Standards for Endorsements in Specific Teaching Fields*) – *Psychology*]

- xv. [Ill. Admin. Code tit. 23, § 27.260](#) [(*Standards for Endorsements in Specific Teaching Fields*) – *Sociology and Anthropology*]

4. Which state agencies and groups are responsible for writing and adopting social studies standards

a. Which agency writes Illinois' social studies standards?

The Standards and Instruction Department of the Illinois State Board of Education is responsible for revising and editing statewide academic standards; the Standards and Instruction Department and other departments within the Illinois State Board of Education assemble committees to write standards and draft recommendations for standards during a revision cycle.

Qualifications for membership on these committees may vary, depending on compliance with state statutory requirements when the revisions are called for by statute or mandate. If the revisions are not required by statute or mandate, the responsible department in the State Board of Education will determine the criteria for qualification and work with other ISBE departments to fill the committee positions, with the Superintendent of Education's final approval of members.

- i. Any questions can be directed to:

Illinois State Board of Education,
Standards and Instruction Department,
ilteachtalklearn@isbe.net

In Illinois' most recent (2020-2022) standards review cycle, these committees have consisted of Illinois educators, teachers, and a number of Illinois-based universities and social studies organizations, chosen in order to reflect geographical and racial diversity in the State of Illinois.

- ii. For more information, see: [Illinois Social Science Review Committee 11/12/2020 Social Science Review Final Report](#) (pg 5–7)

Additionally, in Illinois’ 2020-2022 standards review cycle, the State Board of Education (ISBE) received assistance from the Inclusive American History Commission in revising its social science learning standards; the Commission was responsible for reviewing instructional resources in school districts, such that they reflected the racial and ethnic diversity of Illinois and US, and providing guidance for social studies standards to “ensure that instruction and content are not biased to value specific cultures, time periods, and experiences” ([105 ILCS 5/2-3.187](#)).

b. Which agency adopts Illinois’ social studies standards?

The Illinois [Joint Committee on Administrative Rules](#) (JCAR), a bipartisan legislative oversight committee created by the Illinois General Assembly, approves revisions to the K-12 Illinois Social Science standards.

- i. Any questions can be directed to:

Illinois State Board of Education,
Standards and Instruction Department,
ilteachtalklearn@isbe.net

5. The electoral or bureaucratic relationships these agencies have with the general public in Illinois

a. How were members of the Illinois Inclusive American History Commission appointed?

The Commission was made up of Illinois Senators, history scholars, teachers, principals, local superintendents, and representatives of school boards, districts, and organizations, and representatives of the Illinois State Board of Education. Members of the Commission were appointed by the State Superintendent of Education, Speaker of the House of Representatives, Minority Leader of the House of Representatives, and Minority Leader of the Senate in accordance with [105 ILCS 5/2-3.187](#).

- i. See: [Inclusive American History Commission ISBE Archived Information Page](#)

b. How are the members of the Illinois Joint Committee on Administrative Rules appointed?

The Illinois Joint Committee on Administrative Rules (JCAR) is composed of 12 legislators who are appointed by Illinois legislative leadership; membership is apportioned equally between the two houses and political parties.

- i. For more information, see: [Joint Commission on Administrative Rules website](#)

c. How are the members of the Illinois State Board of Education appointed?

The State Board consists of nine members who are appointed by the Governor with the consent of the Senate ([105 ILCS 5/1A-1](#)).

- i. See: [Idaho State Board of Education Information Page](#)

d. How is the Illinois State Superintendent of Education appointed?

The Illinois State Superintendent of Education is appointed by the Illinois State Board of Education and serves at its pleasure ([105 ILCS 5/1A-4](#)).

6. What opportunity Illinois community members and educators have to offer feedback and comment during a standards' revision cycle

a. Where does public input occur during Illinois' standards revision process?

The Illinois State Board of Education offers two distinct opportunities for public feedback and involvement during the standards' revision process:

- i. **45 Day Public Comment Period:** Following the presentation of suggested revisions to Illinois' existing social studies standards to the Illinois State Board of Education and approval by the Board, drafts of proposed revisions are posted on the Illinois State Board of Education website for a 45-day public review and comment period. Edits to the standards are then made with the consideration of the received public input.
- ii. **Public Hearings:** The Illinois State Board of Education holds public hearings during a social science standards revision cycle. After edits are made to proposed standards following the 45 day comment period, standards are then subjected to a second round of public comment through a public Joint Commission on Administrative Rule (JCAR) hearing requirement.

Notices for public comment are issued on the [Illinois State Board of Education website](#) and public hearing periods on the [Joint Commission on Administrative Rules website](#).

- iii. Any questions can be directed to:

Illinois State Board of Education,
Standards and Instruction Department,
ilteachtalklearn@isbe.net

Furthermore, during Illinois' most recent 2020-2022 social studies standards revision cycle, the Inclusive American History Commission meetings were public pursuant to the [Illinois Open Meetings Act](#) and allowed time for public testimony and comment.

iv. See:

1. [2021 Inclusive American History Commission Rules of Procedure](#) (pg 2)
2. [Inclusive American History Commission Archived ISBE Information Page](#)